

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Withdrawn): A method for treatment of effluents comprising:

subjecting a flow of the effluents to a pulsed electric field that has an effect of modifying physicochemical and biologic characteristics, the modifying being used during a solid/liquid separation operation, the solid/liquid separation and application of the pulsed electric field being operations carried out at different locations in the effluent flow,

wherein the pulsed electric field is used according to a discharge mode, the discharge mode being obtained by pulse discharge of a capacitor powered by a dc power supply, and having adjustable voltage value, current value, pulse repetition frequency, and voltage front shape characteristics.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): A method according to claim 14, wherein the pulsed electric field is used according to a charge or discharge mode, the charge mode being obtained by pulse charge of a capacitor powered by a dc power supply.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): A method according to claim 14, wherein the solid/liquid separation operation comprises a membrane filtration operation.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): A method according to claim 16, wherein the membrane filtration is chosen among tangential filtration, frontal filtration, and semi-frontal type filtration.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): A method according to claim 14, wherein the solid/liquid separation operation comprises a settlement operation.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): A method according to claim 14, wherein the pulsed electric field has characteristics adjusted so that the modifying of physicochemical and biological characteristics enables hydrolysis of dissolved substances, aggregation of colloids, complete or partial destruction of microorganisms, and simultaneous activation of remaining microorganisms.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): Application of the method according to claim 14 to treatment of treatment plant effluents and sludge, either in an activated sludge reactor or in a rotofermenter.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): An installation for treatment of effluents, comprising:

means for subjecting a flow of the effluents to a solid/liquid separation operation; and
means for subjecting the flow of the effluents to a pulsed electric field that has an effect of modifying physicochemical and biologic characteristics, the modifying being used during a solid/liquid separation,

the means for subjecting the flow of the effluents to the solid/liquid separation operation and the means for subjecting the flow of the effluents to the pulsed electric field being located at different locations along the effluent flow, wherein the means for subjecting the flow of the effluent to the pulsed electric field operates according to a discharge mode, the discharge mode being obtained by pulse discharge of a capacitor powered by a dc power

supply, discharged through a load inductor and having adjustable voltage value, current value, pulse repetition frequency, and voltage front shape characteristics, said load inductor reducing a voltage applied to the effluents during pulse discharging of the capacitor.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): An installation according to claim 21, wherein the means for subjecting the flow of the effluents to the pulsed electric field operates according to a charge and discharge mode, the charge mode being obtained by pulse charge of a capacitor powered by a dc power supply.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): An installation according to claim 21, wherein the means for subjecting the effluent flow to the solid/liquid separation operation comprises membrane filtration means.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): An installation according to claim 23, wherein the membrane filtration means is chosen from among tangential filtration, frontal filtration, and semi-frontal type filtration means.

Claim 25 (Withdrawn): An installation according to claim 21, wherein the means for subjecting the effluent flow to the solid/liquid separation comprises settlement means.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): An installation according to claim 21, wherein the pulsed electric field has characteristics adjusted so that the modifying of physicochemical and biological characteristics enables hydrolysis of dissolved substances, aggregation of colloids, complete or partial destruction of microorganisms, and simultaneous activation of remaining microorganisms.

Claim 27 (New): An installation for treatment of effluents, comprising:

a solid/liquid separator located at a first location in an effluent flow stream and configured to subject a flow of the effluents to a solid/liquid separation operation; and

an effluent treatment unit located at a second location different than the first location and configured to subject the flow of the effluents to a pulsed electric field,

said effluent treatment unit including an effluent treatment head, a dc power supply, a capacitor powered by a dc power supply, a load inductor, and a switch configured to discharge the capacitor through the effluent treatment head and the load inductor in a discharge mode, wherein the discharge mode having adjustable voltage value, current value, pulse repetition frequency, and voltage front shape characteristics; and

said load inductor reducing a voltage applied to the effluent treatment head during pulse discharging of the capacitor.